

IN THE CLAIMS:

NE on ~~initial~~ ^{red} A Please cancel Claims 1 through 14 in their entirety without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter thereof.

Please amend claims 15, 16, 17, ~~18~~, 20, 21, ~~25~~ and 26 as follows:

15. (Amended) A mold for providing [said] an optical connector ferrule comprising:
a mating surface made of resin;
an optical fiber accomodating hole having an inner surface and one end portion, said
inner surface extending along a predetermined axis and being made of the resin, and one end
portion reaching said mating surface;
a first guide projection having proximal and distal end portions, said first guide projection
continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, and said first
guide projection being made of the resin; and
a guide engaging portion continuously extending from said mating surface along the
predetermined axis, said guide engaging portion made of the resin, [according to claim 1] the
mold comprising:

first, second, third, and fourth mold units for defining a cavity for providing said ferrule;
said first and second mold units, combined with each other to define the cavity, providing
opening portions toward the predetermined axis so as to provide a housing portion for housing
said third and fourth mold units;

said third and fourth mold units being housed in the housing portion so as to be movable
along the predetermined axis with respect to said combined first and second mold units; and

said third mold unit including a guide projection forming portion, at least one pin, and an engaging portion forming portion, said guide projection forming portion having an inner surface and a bottom surface and extending along the predetermined axis, said at least one pin extending along the predetermined axis, and said engaging portion forming portion being provided to form said engaging portion and extending along the predetermined axis.

16. (Amended) A mold for providing [said] an optical connector ferrule comprising:

a mating surface made of resin;

an optical fiber accomodating hole having an inner surface and one end portion, said inner surface extending along a predetermined axis and being made of the resin, and one end portion reaching said mating surface;

a first guide projection having proximal and distal end portions, said first guide projection continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, and said first guide projection being made of the resin; and

a guide engaging portion continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, said guide engaging portion made of the resin, wherein said guide engaging portion includes a second guide projection having proximal and distal end portions, said second guide projection continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, and said second guide projection being made of the resin, [according to claim 2] the mold comprising:

first, second, third, and fourth mold units for defining a cavity for providing said ferrule;
said first and second mold units, combined with each other to define the cavity, and

providing opening portions toward the predetermined axis so as to provide a housing portion for housing said third and fourth mold units;

said third and fourth mold units being housed in the housing portion so as to be movable along the predetermined axis with respect to said combined first and second mold units; and

said third mold unit including a pair of guide projection forming portions and at least one pin, each guide projection forming portion extending along the predetermined axis and having an inner surface and a bottom surface, and said at least one pin extending along the predetermined axis.

17. (Amended) A mold for providing [said] an optical connector ferrule comprising:
a mating surface made of resin;

an optical fiber accomodating hole having an inner surface and one end portion, said inner surface extending along a predetermined axis and being made of the resin, and one end portion reaching said mating surface;

a first guide projection having proximal and distal end portions, said first guide projection continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, and said first guide projection being made of the resin; and

a guide engaging portion continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, said guide engaging portion made of the resin, wherein said guide engaging portion includes a guide hole having an opening portion, a distal end portion, and an inner surface, said opening portion being provided on said mating surface, said inner surface being made of the resin, and said guide hole extending along the predetermined axis, [according to

claim 5] the mold comprising:

first, second, third, and fourth mold units for defining a cavity for providing said ferrule;
said first and second mold units, combined with each other to define the cavity, providing
opening portions toward the predetermined axis so as to provide a housing portion for housing
said third and fourth mold units;

said third and fourth mold units being housed in the housing portion so as to be movable
along the predetermined axis with respect to said combined first and second mold units; and

said third mold unit including a guide projection forming portion, a projection, and at
least one pin, said guide projection forming portion having an inner surface and a bottom surface
and extending along the predetermined axis, said projection having a side surface and extending
along the predetermined axis, and said at least one pin extending along the predetermined axis.

Claim 18, line 1, delete "or 17".

Claim 20, line 1, delete "any one of claims 15 to 19" and insert claim --15--.

Claim 21, line 1, delete "or 17".

25. (Amended) A method of inspecting a position of a fiber accommodating hole of

[said] an optical connector ferrule comprising:

a mating surface made of resin;

an optical fiber accommodating hole having an inner surface and one end portion, said

inner surface extending along a predetermined axis and being made of the resin, and one end portion reaching said mating surface;

a first guide projection having proximal and distal end portions, said first guide projection continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, and said first guide projection being made of the resin; and

a guide engaging portion continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, said guide engaging portion made of the resin, wherein said guide engaging portion includes a second guide projection having proximal and distal end portions, said second guide projection continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, and said second guide projection being made of the resin, [according to claim 2] with respect to the first guide projection thereof, the method comprising the steps of:

preparing a jig having a pair of positioning holes provided such that the first and second guide projections of said ferrule can be inserted therein;

receiving light passing through the pair of positioning holes of said jig to determine the positions of the positioning holes of said jig based on the received light;

inserting the first and second guide projections into the positioning holes;

receiving light passing through the fiber accommodating hole and determining positions of the fiber accommodating hole based on the received light; and

inspecting the position of the fiber accommodating hole with respect to the first and second guide projections based on the determined positions of the fiber accommodating hole and the positioning holes.

26. (Amended) A method of inspecting a position of a fiber accommodating hole of [said] an optical connector ferrule ferrule comprising:

a mating surface made of resin;

an optical fiber accomodating hole having an inner surface and one end portion, said inner surface extending along a predetermined axis and being made of the resin, and one end portion reaching said mating surface;

a first guide projection having proximal and distal end portions, said first guide projection

continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, and said first guide projection being made of the resin; and

a guide engaging portion continuously extending from said mating surface along the predetermined axis, said guide engaging portion made of the resin, wherein said guide engaging portion includes a guide hole having an opening portion, a distal end portion, and an inner surface, said opening portion being provided on said mating surface, said inner surface being made of the resin, and said guide hole extending along the predetermined axis, [according to claim 5] with respect to the first guide projection thereof, the method comprising the steps of:

preparing a first jig having a pair of positioning holes provided such that the projections of said ferrule can be inserted therein;

receiving light passing through the pair of positioning holes of said jig to determine the positions of the positioning holes of said jig based on the received light;

preparing a second jig having a positioning projection provided so as to be inserted into the first guide hole of said ferrule to insert the positioning projection of said second jig into one of the pair of positioning holes;